



## ARTIST BIOS

### **XAVIER EIKERENKOETTER: CO FOUNDER**



Xavier's credentials include a BA degree in philosophy from Columbia University, and a master's in counseling psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute,

focusing upon Jungian and depth psychology. His thirty years of spiritual training, shamanic, meditative and ritual experience includes three years at the Center for Personal Transformation in the experiential study of deep meditative techniques.

Xavier's work has fruitfully blended music and psychotherapeutic work. He has incorporated a love of ancient cultures into successful programs with coming-of-age youth, dedicated to helping young people make the successful transition into adulthood. He has designed, developed and implemented mentoring programs that include a combination of esoteric religious practices, principles of universal spirituality, and proven psychological approaches.

**PETER WALDEN: CO FOUNDER AND  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**





"All drumming consists of listening. It is the constant connection to the song carried within us that allows us to find our place in the rhythm again. This deep and active listening allows us to constantly refine what we play, and because the space between our notes cannot ever be perfect, drumming is an experience of constant listening, constant space, constant mistakes, and the dedication to find our place in the collective song again."

-Peter Walden

Peter's initiation into the path of healing began with his own struggle at a young age to overcome chronic illness. His long healing journey brought him through the investigation of many healing modalities. He is thankful for all the experiences he has had on the road where arts, healing and communities meet.

He has studied and performed West African drum and dance for more than 20 years. His various teachers include members of Les Ballets Africains and Ballet Djoliba. He is currently active in the tradition of the great Djembefola Mamady D'Keita.

Peter is also active as a cellist and multi-instrumentalist. He began playing the cello at age four and has shared the stage with diverse acts such as the Latin Jazz great Chuchito Valdez, superstar Macy Gray, members of the Parliament Funkadelic and the famed rapper DJ Quick. He has also created and performed his own music for theater and dance productions. Peter's recording credits include numerous independent films and albums as well as recording sessions for TV. .

As an educator, he has taught songwriting, music production, music of the African diaspora, West African drumming, and cello to students of all ages in settings such as school programs, juvenile detention facilities and community centers around the United States. He was formerly the Director of the strings program at the Boston Arts High School, a touring manager for Climb Theater Company, and a presenter for the international Arts Therapy Summit.

## **FRED JONES: TEACHING ARTIST, BABA**



Frederick Jones, also known as Djangewali, hails from St. Louise, Missouri where he began his studies in African arts in 1974 under the direction of MorThiam. He later move to Chicago, performed with the Sun Drummers and became a musical director and dancer with Muntu Dance Theatre. Fred moved to Los Angeles in 1990, studied with Mamady Keita's TamTam Mandigue and Moustapha Mabgoura's Le Bagatae and is currently the artistic director of Abalaye African Dance Ensemble.

Fred' performances and recording experiences have involved the musical talents of Stevie Wonder,

Stanley Clarke, Lorenzo De Jesus, Bill Summers, and Suleiman Diop, among others.

Fred spent 12 years as the African Drumming and Dance instructor at UCLA and has performed nationally in numerous residencies.

### **ANINDO MARSHALL: TEACHING ARTIST, VOICE OF NATURE**



Anindo began her musical and dance career in her homeland of Kenya, as a vocalist/dancer/percussionist.

She enjoyed a successful solo career in Europe, as a vocalist, singing a recording contract with EMI Spain

and becoming known as Kenya's singing sensation. Anindo has performed with Babatunde Olatunji and Mickey Hart of the Grateful Dead, among others.

While in Kenya as a young dance student in ballet, modern, jazz and African, she met Saundra Barnes, a Dunham dancer living in Kenya and teaching Dunham Technique.

Anindo studied with Ms. Barnes (Ife) and in 1983 moved to the USA continuing her study of the technique with Miss Dunham and Dunham Masters like: Pearl Reynolds, Archie Savage, Lucille Ellis, Tommy Gomez, Tally Beatty, Vanove Aikens, TheoJamison, Ronald Marshall and Keith Williams.

Today Ms. Marshall is a Certified Dunham Technique Instructor and serves as a board member of the Katherine Dunham Certification Board. She has taught and continues to teach worldwide including at Debbie Allen Dance Academy, Dance Dimensions, Lula Washington Dance Theater, Occidental College, LMU and conducts Dunham Technique residencies in LAUSD schools as parts of the Arts Community Partnership Network. She is also conducting residencies in colleges all over the US.

Anindo is also an accomplished

musician, percussionist and a dance teacher of African dance from East, South, Central and West Africa. She has studied with the world's finest percussionists, Babatunde Olatunji, Mamady Keita, Mor Thiam, Lamin Dido Camara, and Karamba Diabate to mention a few. She has studied West African dance under the tutelage of such teachers as Kimoko Samo (formerly artistic director of Les Ballets Africains of Guinea W. Africa), Marie Basse and countless others. Anindo teaches percussion from Africa and Latin America to children and adults in workshops worldwide.

### **KAHLIL CUMMINGS: TEACHING ARTIST, DRUM CAPTAIN**



Kahlil Cummings, a Los Angeles native, is an acclaimed drummer, exceptional performer, composer, and educator. Kahlil



was recognized as a child prodigy very early; since childhood, he has played with numerous reputable groups including Ballet Folclórico Do Brasil, Sona Sané, Abalayé, Mila Samba School, Inu Olorun, Debbie Allen Dance Company, Les Amazones, and Viver Brasil. Kahlil honed his rhythmic gifts with noted teachers including Mestre Amen Santo, Jose Ricardo Sousa, Kobla Ladzekpo, Esteban “Cha Cha” Bacallao (Ibae), and Sandy Perez. His studies in Guinea, Brazil and Cuba have helped to widely broaden his knowledge and musical strength.

However, he is most profoundly influenced by West African master drummer Mamady Keita, with whom he has studied since the age of 13. Kahlil helped start the group Balandugu Kan, which was sanctioned by Keita as representing “the voice of Balandugu”--- the village where Keita was born. His compositions can be heard on his debut album Iniké Baba, recorded live in Guinea, West Africa.

Kahlil was the musical director for opening numbers for both the NAACP Image Awards and the Choreographers Awards in 2004. Since then, he has performed with several renowned artists such as Janelle Monae (American Idol), Shakira (music video “Waka Waka), and R. Kelly. He recently recorded percussion for Aloe Blacc in a song titled “Let the Games Begin,” which was featured in the movie “Race.” In addition, Kahlil performed with Pharrell Williams and Kendrick Lamar in the 2015 and 2016 Grammy Awards, respectively. His prolific abilities have even taken him as far as Japan, where he

produced and recorded music for Takarazuka, an elite Japanese theater ensemble, and for Pomba, a well-known fitness company.

Currently Kahlil plays and tours with international recording artist Rocky Dawuni, and can be heard on the album “Branches of the Same Tree,” which earned a Grammy nomination for Best Reggae Album of the Year in 2016. He is now the musical director for Viver Brasil, Los Angeles’s premier Afro-Brazilian dance company. His latest musical project, Capofresh, a hypnotic blend of West African, Afro-Cuban, Brazilian and hip-hop rhythms fused with an LA sound is due out later this year.

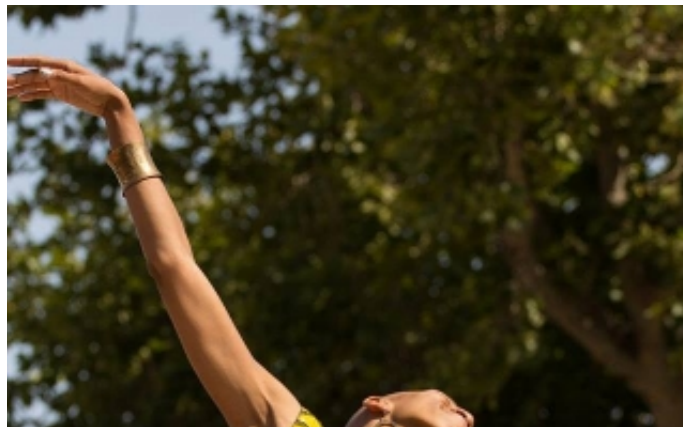
## **EVAN "CRISTO" GREER: TEACHING ARTIST**

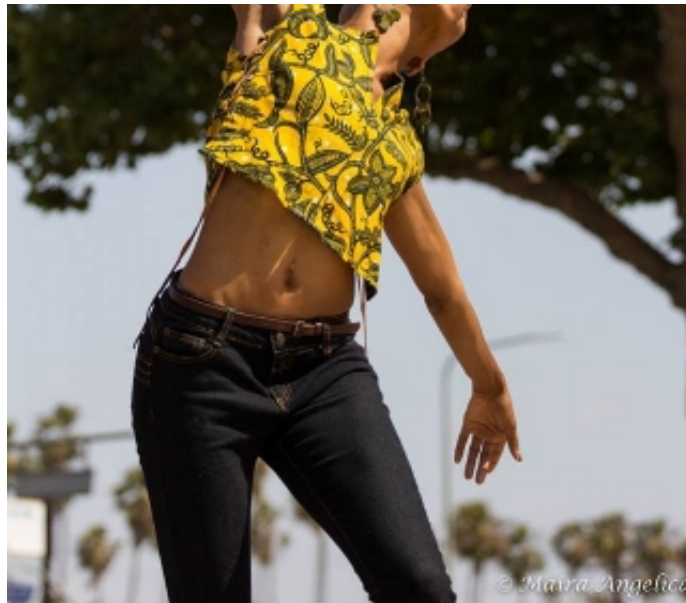


Evan "Cristo" Greer is a dynamic artist who never separates the divine element from any artistic setting he is placed in. He began to perform

professionally at the age of 13. This experience along with his continued study and growth have led him to work with people like Aloe Blacc, QVLN, OVEOUS, Janelle Monae, R. Kelly, Keb' Mo', Quetzal, Dwight Tribble, Shakira, Kanye West, Michael Belayneh and Rocky Dawuni.

Evan's education in music began at 3 years old when he began to take drum lessons from Darryl Ross. He also attended Hamilton Academy of Music and California State University, Northridge where he completed two years in the Jazz Studies department. In addition to formal education, Evan has traveled the world to absorb the music. Evan began writing songs at the age of 9. At 17, he composed his first piece in the jazz idiom and he produced and recorded his first song at 18. With his group The SHED he released 3 mixtapes *In the Trenches*, *Strange*, and *Kites*. He continues to record and perform solo and as a member of the rising West Coast Huxtables Crew.





Jahanna Blunt, a native of Los Angeles, California, began her dance career as a seven-year-old with Abalaye African Drum and Dance Ensemble. While majoring in acting, she continued to dance throughout her time in high school at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts and in college at UCLA's School of Theater Film and Television. Jahanna has taught African Dance courses for the Los Angeles Unified School District and for the University of La Verne, as well as workshops and studio classes. She has choreographed for the University of Southern California's theater department, for the Lower Depth Theater Ensemble, and for the renowned JazzAntiqua Music and Dance Ensemble. Jahanna's performance credits include Global Soul Night at the Hollywood Bowl, the BET Awards at the Kodak Theater, and various concerts at the Ford Amphitheater. Most recently, she has collaborated with her close friends to create Le Ballet Dembaya, a brand new West African drum and dance company. She feels blessed to be able to use her gifts to serve the mission at Rhythm Arts Alliance and looks forward to a bright future with the company.

**Please consider making a donation to help fund our work with at-risk**

and incarcerated youth  
throughout Los Angeles County.

DONATE

